

RENEWING STRENGTH

Rose Williams (October 2004)

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I have never thought of myself
As being bound in a body
I could not control

Throughout my life
My focus has always been on
The strength of the inward part of me
That has helped me for the most part
Overcome every obstacle or struggle

And if I couldn't overcome
The same inner strength
Would help me accept it and move on

But somehow, being bound in a body
I can not control is far different
Than becoming wheelchair bound

An overwhelming heaviness
A type of sadness I can't explain

The exhorter in me had always
Instructed others to snap out of it
But for some reason I could not
A stronghold like none other

What would I do now
Was there life after a wheelchair
Wanted that inner strength
But kept focusing on the outward

Weeks turned into months
Then deliverance came in a phrase
"Motorized chair"
An instant freedom, an instant joy
A brand new strength

People sometimes feel sad for me
Knowing how active I once was
But what they don't know is that
Although I am more challenged
It hasn't slowed me down
In fact, the power chair has speeded me up

I'm much busier now it seems
Cooking, cleaning, entertaining, reading
Writing, speaking, teaching, swimming, and
traveling
New opportunities, new friends
An abundant life

God sometimes teaches us through hardships
And I have learned many things
One of those lessons for me is that
Though living independently
Things will happen beyond my control

I have read many times
That God's grace is sufficient
But it wasn't until I experienced a "real"
hardship
That I grasped the true meaning of this special
kind of grace

And most of all, I have learned
To be more sensitive of hurting people
Who have strongholds
Encouraging them to take hold of
God's renewing strength
As I have found, to help them overcome



Rose Williams lives in Charlottesville, Virginia. Born with cerebral palsy, she graduated from Lane High School and worked at the University of Virginia Medical Center for eighteen years. Rose has studied computer science, creative writing, and public speaking at Piedmont Virginia Community College and has written a collection of poems and essays about her life. Recently confined to a wheelchair due to degenerative joint problems, she currently co-chairs the local VSA arts committee and conducts poetry workshops for Charlottesville's Therapeutic Recreation and Leisure Services and other community events. She attends Covenant Church of God and is a special friend of the Spring Hill Baptist Special Needs Ministry Team and the church congregation.